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CIA KNEW OF NICARAGUAN REBEL ATROCITIES; BUT DEEMED THEM ISOLATED
BY ROBERT PARRY

WASHINGTON (AP) - The CIA has known for more than a year that some Nicaraguan rebel soldiers committed atrocities during raids into the leftist-ruled country; but it has insisted that abuses are isolated and largely under control, Reagan administration and congressional officials say.

The clearest case involved a rebel leader, called Commander Suicide, who went on a rampage in mid-1983 after his wife, also a rebel, was killed, said the officials, who insisted on anonymity.

They said Commander Suicide and some of his troops raped peasant women and murdered civilians.

When he returned to Honduras near the end of 1983, Commander Suicide was placed in a makeshift jail in eastern Honduras, court-martialed and executed, according to a U.S. official and Edgar Chamorro, propaganda chief for the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, the largest U.S.-backed rebel group.

In an interview, Chamorro said he protested the execution to a CIA officer who was advising the rebel group, known by its Spanish initials FDN, but was told that the action was proper because the court-martial had found Commander Suicide 'guilty of many abuses.'

Administration officials knowledgeable about the Nicaraguan fighting said last week they have received numerous reports about other atrocities allegedly committed by FDN forces, but that only Commander Suicide's rampage has been fully corroborated.

Most of the other allegations come from Nicaragua's Sandinista government or from American missionaries living in Nicaragua who are opposed to Reagan administration policies. But some allegations also have come from conservative Nicaraguans who oppose the FDN, one official said.

The Nicaraguan government claims 854 civilians have been 'assassinated' by rebel forces since fighting began in 1981.

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